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A LOAN EXHIBITION
OF
PAINTINGS
BY ELLIOTT DAINGERFIELD

New York (City) Reinhardt, Paul

LOAN EXHIBITION
of
PAINTINGS

BY
ELLIOTT DAINGERFIELD
MARCH 28th — APRIL 11th

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GALLERIES OF
HENRY REINHARDT & SON
565 FIFTH AVENUE

1917

THE GRAND CANYON

PAINTED BY ELLIOTT DAINGERFIELD

*Gleaming with glory in its setting grand
The Canyon like a great fire-opal lies
Burning with the bright beauty of the skies—
A perfect jewel in the sunlit land.
And here an artist with a magic hand
Has made the vision of its wonder rise
Like some mirage in heaven for our eyes
To feast upon and try to understand.*

*This world is but the mighty diadem
God, as a crown, wears on His kingly brow.
And this great opal, burning like the sun,
What is it but that single perfect gem
Outshining all earth's jewels, flashing now
Among them, and of all the brightest one?*

In his figure subjects it is the subtle meaning of a gesture, the look on some half-turned face or a pose perhaps that suggests the emotion of the scene; but always his paintings are informed with some motive sufficient to lift them beyond any peradventure of the commonplace.

—Frederic Fairchild Sherman.

But no mere painter, whatever his technical skill, has ever yet or ever will comprehend the secret beauties or truths, either of nature or of life, sufficiently to re-create them upon canvas with that inescapable touch of magic which any painting must have to stir the imagination and satisfy the eyes of them that, having eyes, look inwardly as well as outwardly, and see the glories beyond as clearly as the beauties about us. Genius only is capable of such a task and genius has idiosyncrasies of its own which give to its work individuality, sometimes in literature a style as strange as Whitman's or in painting as weird as Blakelock's. But the work of genius, however touched with madness it may seem, is vital. It moves with splendid rhythm, it sings with a voice of heavenly beauty, it throbs and glows with life!

Mr. Elliott Daingerfield, among contemporary American artists, pursues an ideal which the public imagination very often fails to visualize, and his most poetic conceptions indeed seem to be viewed by the general public as through a glass darkly, however brightly they may glow with that richness of color which at times suggests the old masters. As a young man his work aroused the enthusiasm of so able and discriminating a judge of painting as George Inness and his later work won the eager and hearty praise of another great critic of art, John La Farge. Recently, in writing about "Nature vs. Art," Mr. Daingerfield has modestly told a story which goes even farther as an illustration of the

point I wish to make in connection with his work, as the remark of the great surgeon which he quotes: "I want a picture of the sea or the mountains seen in a better, finer way than I can see it myself," was intended to explain the satisfaction he found in Mr. Daingerfield's work and illustrates the very real and deep meaning it has for great natures and great minds. Compared with the ability to stir the imaginations and to fill the eyes of such men with revelations of the wonder and the beauty of nature and of life, a popular success, such as might be won by the effort more nearly to gauge one's genius to the understanding of the many, could never bring any real or lasting satisfaction to an artist capable of great things.

I do not know that any of Mr. Daingerfield's pictures, save one, a very lovely Madonna done many years ago, has ever taken a prize in any exhibition. Some of his canvases which have never been entered in competition and seldom shown to the public are, however, among the most poetic conceptions in American art. I should say that their interest, as well as their charm, is due to his insight into the glory of nature and the meaning and the mystery of life—that, and the individuality of his color, its depth and its brilliance.

His landscapes are never mere pictures, for, with all the perfection of their finish, re-creating as they do the sentiment of the place as well as the scene itself, it is the sense of truth that is in them, their meaning, I may say, that makes them really vital.

And this is because he sees a meaning in our landscape and fixes it in his paintings of it.

With a subtle perfection of emphasis which is estimated very accurately, he fixes in his revelation of it the feeling, the sentiment or the meaning of a landscape; it may be by a shadow or by a touch of light, by a flower or by a figure, or by several figures, either realistic or fanciful. And, after all, the meaning is not invariably obvious but only suggested, as it is in nature itself, and so it often escapes the eyes of the superficial observer, just as it remains undiscovered in the world about us by thousands of unobservant people.

The Drama of the Mountain-top illustrates very forcibly how literally true it is that the lasting loveliness of his most imaginative revelations of the beauty of landscape has its firm foundation in a conscious and just appreciation of the necessity for realizing the actual aspects of a scene sufficiently to be always convincing. However he may enrich with color or with imagination the visible beauty of a scene, its essential individuality is duly emphasized and informs the poetry of his landscape with an inevitable and unmistakable resemblance to the reality of the world in which we live.

In the lyric vein his offering is particularly choice and for a fine example the present display presents the Arcadian Huntress, a landscape pervaded by a perfume from Parnassus, in which Diana is glimpsed again as in the brave days of old, still following the chase.

Mr. Daingerfield visited the Grand Canyon a few years ago and ever since his first trip thereto it has continued to be the inspiration of many of his most important canvases. Beginning with the approximately realistic rendering of its shimmering glory in the Opalescent Morning, which turned out to be but a prelude, he developed the motive with the assurance of a great composer improvising upon an enchanting theme and produced that miraculous apotheosis of earthly beauty, the City That Never Was, which is certainly the equal of a fine Turner, as well as the brooding mystery of the moonlit Tower of Silence, that mighty rock in the wilderness standing alone like a monument to a vanished race on the edge of the world.

His paintings of the Grand Canyon are not literal transcripts of any scene you will see, but marvelous re-creations of the glowing color and the wild grandeur of the place—opal mountains and crimson peaks touched with mists of pearl and of pink and the chasms between brimming with many-colored shadow. He has put into his renderings of it the miracle of color which is the essential glory of the Canyon without sacrifice of necessary truth to nature in his drawing, and the result is that his canvases are full of the poetry as well as the beauty, the wonder as well as the grandeur of its scenery; and while they impress one with its sublimity they thrill one at the same moment with the joy of its vibrating light and the peace of its shadowed mystery.





1

THE GENIUS OF THE CANYON

LOANED BY

Mrs. Chauncey J. Blair, Chicago

2

A VISION OF THE DAWN

LOANED BY

Mrs. Theodore C. Keller, Evanston, Ill.

3

AN ARCADIAN HUNTRESS

LOANED BY

The City Art Museum, St. Louis

4

THE CITY THAT NEVER WAS

LOANED BY

Mr. George S. Palmer, New London, Conn.

5

HERO LAMENTING LEANDER

LOANED BY

Mr. W. O. Goodman, Chicago

6

THE ENCHANTED SEA

LOANED BY

Mr. W. O. Goodman, Chicago

7

OPALESCENT MORNING—GRAND CANYON

LOANED BY

Mr. Louis Ettlinger, New York City

8

STORM CLEARING UP

LOANED BY

The Toledo Museum, Toledo, Ohio

9

THE MOONLIGHT MADONNA

10

THE CALL OF THE HILLS

11

THE MYSTERY OF MOONRISE

12

SUNSET—MISTS AND SHADOWS

13

THE DRAMA OF THE MOUNTAIN-TOP

14

TWILIGHT CALM

LOANED BY

Dr. Fred Whiting, New York City

15

TOWER OF SILENCE

LOANED BY

Dr. Fred Whiting, New York City

16

SUNSET, GRAND CANYON

LOANED BY

Mr. Burton Mansfield, New Haven, Conn.

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